

19 March 1965

**MEMORANDUM RE : Board on Geographic Names (BGN) Traffic
in Ad Hoc Place Name Inquiries**

The latest reporting, which OBI requires in view of its almost full funding of BGN for the primary mission of compiling names for NIS Gazetteers, indicates the increasing problem in the BGN activity which has developed in answering ad hoc name inquiries from within and outside the government.

During calendar year 1964 the BGN staff spent, according to figures supplied OBI, almost 4 manyears in answering these ad hoc inquiries outside direct NIS business. (This relates to a total on-duty figure of some 70 manyears.) The number of such inquiries has increased from 7600 in FY63 to 10,000 in FY64 and to 8600 in the first half of FY65. Inquiries identified as for CIA (perhaps including some NIS) were some 18% of the FY64 total. The reported manhours spent in the first half of FY64 were 2800, in the second half were 3500, and in the first half of FY65 were 4200.

These figures are subject to the limitations of any book-keeping of this kind and inherently are not likely to fully reflect the total diversion of time -- allowing for the many individuals who can become involved in a file search and possible discussion, which can be very extensive if BGN has not been recently working on the area. They also can be affected by BGN's receptiveness to such inquiries, of which OBI has been aware while Gazetteer production has lagged behind schedule.

These inquiries exclude NIS-connected queries for which procedures have been and are in effect, but may include minor NIS traffic. The cited totals recently have been increased by queries relative to Antarctica, which BGN asserts are charged to a National Science Foundation contract. The precise quantitative impact of the former Place-Name Information Service (which would not be the channel for most CIA queries) cannot be determined and in itself is not likely to be a critical matter in the evident over-all problem. This BGN activity ostensibly is primarily restricted to place names not included in published Gazetteers, but exceptions can be expected and can be tolerated so long as the level does not unduly divert BGN personnel from their primary contract task. OBI has emphasized this to BGN. The above was the basis for the amended intra-CIA notice OBI worked out with D/CR and for the quite specific memorandum circulated in DIA at the request of the Chairman NIS Committee.

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The attached sets forth some
25X1A9a data [REDACTED] was interested
in on BGN place name inquiries.

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